

DOCKET NO.: FCI-2545
Application No.: 09/841,225
Office Action Dated:

PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO 37 CFR § 1.116

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In summary, claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 1-8, 10-16, and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102, and claims 9 and 17 are objected to. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. No claims are amended by this response. No new matter is added.

Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-8, 10-16, and 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,394,853, issued to Hammond et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Hammond et al.").

Hammond et al. neither discloses nor suggests "certain of said tail end portions of said second terminal contacts are electrically connected to certain of said tail end portions of said first terminal contacts" as recited in independent claim 1 and "certain of said first terminal contacts being electrically connected to certain of said second terminal contacts" as recited in independent claim 13.

TELEPHONE CONFERENCES

Applicants wish to thank Examiners Bradley, Leon, and Figueroa, for their assistance and cooperation during several telephone conferences conducted during the month of May, 2003. During the first two weeks of May, 2003, Applicants' representative tried to contact Examiner Leon to discuss the subject final Office Action dated April 3, 2003. On May 12, Examiner Leon called Applicants' representative, leaving a voice mail message indicating that he would be out of the office until May 31, 2003. Applicants' representative called Examiner Leon's supervisor, Examiner Bradley on May 12, 2003. On May 21, 2003, Examiner Bradley called Applicants' representative to discuss the subject final Office Action. Examiner Bradley said that she would assign an examiner to review this office action and call Applicants' representative. On May 28, 2003, Examiner Figueroa called Applicants' representative, leaving a voice mail message to call him back.

SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION

On May 29, 2003, Applicants' representative called Examiner Figueroa to discuss the rejection of claims 1-8, 10-16, and 18-20. Applicants' representative explained that, to

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support this assertion, the subject final Office Action directs Applicants' attention to Figure 2 of Hammond et al. It is asserted in the subject final Office Action that Figure 2 of Hammond et al. clearly shows certain of the tail end portions of the second terminal contacts electrically connected to certain of the tail end portion of the first terminal contact. Applicants' representative explained to Examiner Figueroa that evidence of that assertion could not be found, and requested that Examiner Figueroa or Examiner Leon direct Applicants' representative to the portion of Hammond et al., in which that description is recited. Examiner Figueroa said he would discuss this issue with Examiner Leon.

RESULT

Examiner Leon called Applicants' representative on Sunday, June 1, leaving a voice mail message stating that he could not find a portion of Hammond et al. reciting that the first and second terminal contacts are electrically connected. Examiner Leon also stated that he would withdraw the finality of the instant office action.

Because Hammond et al. neither discloses nor suggests "certain of said tail end portions of said second terminal contacts are electrically connected to certain of said tail end portions of said first terminal contacts" and "certain of said first terminal contacts being electrically connected to certain of said second terminal contacts", as recited in independent claims 1 and 13, respectively, it is requested that the rejection of independent claims 1 and 13, and their dependent claims 2-8, 10-12, and 14-16, 18-20, respectively, under 35 U.S.C. §102 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge that claims 9 and 17 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In view of the above presented remarks, it is requested that the objections to claims 9 and 17 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of this application and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. In the event that the Examiner cannot allow this application for any reason, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney to discuss resolution of any remaining issues.

Respectfully,

Date: June 3, 2003



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